

GreatOutdoors.com Growth spurs Expansion to Central Oregon

by Bend Weekly News Sources

GreatOutdoors.com, a leading online website for outdoor gear, clothing, and information, today announced its plans to expand operations into Redmond, OR, just 15 miles from the outdoor mecca that is Bend, OR.

GreatOutdoors.com has experienced rapid growth in online sales and as a result has outgrown its existing facilities in Washington State. The decision to expand into Central Oregon reflects the attractiveness of both the quality of life in the region and business environment of the Enterprise Zone. The region is known for its outdoor gems such as Smith Rock, Mount Bachelor, the Deschutes River, Metolius River, Cascade Mountains, Cascade Lakes, vast wilderness areas including Mt. Thielsen, Rogue, Three Sisters, etc., and its ideal outdoor recreational climate. This coupled with the incentives offered by the State of Oregon and the City of Redmond and the compelling business environment of the region make for the ideal expansion location.

Keeton-King Construction has already broken ground on what will initially be a 35,000 square foot facility for GreatOutdoors.com in the Redmond Airport Business Center. Plans are on schedule to have the facility operational in time for the holiday sales rush. This expansion will initially bring an estimated 40 jobs to the region. GreatOutdoors.com will use the building as a distribution facility, a call center, and administrative offices. The company plans to maintain its operations in Kirkland, Washington.

"This decision is the result of a unique set of circumstances all coming together at the same time," explained Mike Morford, GreatOutdoors.com President. "Our company has recently experienced rapid growth and even broader acceptance by the online outdoor community. That growth lead to our expansion needs and the City of Redmond and State of Oregon provided attractive economic incentives to bring us into a region that perfectly matches the lifestyle we are all about." Morford spoke of the company's extensive research of six west coast towns where the company evaluated ideal characteristics for both economic and lifestyle conditions and Central Oregon was the clear choice. "We serve a number of people, first and foremost our customers, our staff, and our investors. This decision was ideal for logistics in quickly delivering gear and clothing to our west coast customers, offering an ideal quality of life for our staff, and providing compelling economic efficiencies for our investors."

Bud Prince and Roger Lee of Economic Development for Central Oregon (EDCO) have been working with GreatOutdoors.com for over a year and a half to bring the various municipalities to the table to draw the company to the region. "This event represents a successful coordination of City, State, and regional municipalities alongside private organizations to bring sustainable economic prosperity to Central Oregon," said Roger Lee, Director of EDCO. "It furthers the region's job growth in both the technology and outdoor recreational equipment sectors." Bud Prince, Manager of Redmond Economic Development, "For a community that was traditionally fueled by summer tourism, timber, and agriculture this represents a valuable balance to the economic portfolio, both in its seasonality and source of revenue. GreatOutdoors.com job growth is strongest in the winter and its revenue is sourced from outside the region."

The company's decision was partially inspired by the book "On Paradise Drive," by author/writer David

Brooks, which highlights the trends of portions of the populace moving to rapidly developing regions for greater quality of life and affordability. It was additionally influenced by the concept of "Geographic-Arbitrage" as described by author/writer Rich Karlgaard in his Forbes.com articles and book, "Life 2.0". This concept revolves around business models serving major metropolitan markets while taking advantage of the benefits of locating in more desirable rural locations that offer richer quality of life and lower costs of living.

About GreatOutdoors.com

GreatOutdoors.com is a premier online site dedicated to inspiring and equipping enthusiasts of the outdoor lifestyle. GreatOutdoors.com has been in business since 1996, originally founded by Cox Cable and the Outdoor Life Network (OLN). The company was later acquired in 2000 by Altrec Inc. ("all trek"). Since that time the company has also sold adventure clothing and gear from brands such as Patagonia, The North Face, Arc'teryx, Burton, Nike, Merrell, Salomon, Mountain Hardwear, Adidas, Keen, Oakley, Roxy, Quiksilver, K2, and many more. The company is known for strong customer service, online innovation, and intriguing online content. More information is available at www.greatoutdoors.com

About Economic Development For Central Oregon (EDCO)

Economic Development for Central Oregon (EDCO) is a private non-profit organization dedicated to building a vibrant and thriving regional economy by attracting new investment and jobs through marketing, recruitment and working with existing employers. More information is available at www.edcoinfo.com

About Keeton-King Construction

Based in Sisters, Oregon, Keeton-King provides quality construction in the Northwest including destination resorts, office complexes, retail malls, medical facilities, schools, housing developments, airport improvements, water reservoirs, and sewer treatment facilities. More information is available at www.keetonking.com

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